

**MEETING NOTES**  
**TASK GROUP 1 CONSERVATION ISSUES**  
**VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA**  
**FEBRUARY 4, 2000**

**Stakeholder Group Members Present:** Aberg, Alsobrook, Anderson, Balfour, Brashear, Bransfield, Brown, Condon, Conner, Egan, Everly, Ferguson, Gleason, Hibbetts, Hillier, Kiriakos, Lilburn, Oviatt, Pickard, Quillman, Raushkolb, Rudnick, Sasaki, Smith, Scarr, Strub, Sullivan, Thomas, Veale, Waldheim, Williams

**Staff Present:** Bell, LaPre, LaRue, Pilmer, Rempel

**Agenda Item #1 Previous Meeting Notes**

The Task Group reviewed the past meeting notes and requested that the “Deal Breakers” list be further clarified. The list needs to be divided up into two lists: non-negotiable issues and strong concern issues. The facilitators will do this prior to the next meeting. The remainder of the notes was acceptable.

**Agenda Item # 2 Briefing on Proposed Boundaries for DWMA's**

The process of setting the DWMA boundaries was based on the following:

- Suggested DWMA boundaries were primarily based on desert tortoise habitat protection needs.
- The rationale behind the proposed DWMA's is based on past management history, present conservation biology/ecological management science, meetings between the scientific members of the team and state and federal agencies, and the most recent on site tortoise studies. The DWMA's are an outgrowth of, and are located in the same general area as, a number of earlier tortoise management areas, including Crucial Tortoise Habitat (BLM California Desert Conservation Area Plan 1980), BLM Category I, II and III tortoise habitat (1989), Fish and Wildlife Service designated critical habitat, and DWMA recommendations set forth in the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan.
- Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat was used as a basic template over which the new DWMA's were outlined. In some instances this new proposal would reduce or decrease the existing critical habitat boundary lines and others it would enlarge them.
- The Recovery Plan recommended that the areas enclosed by DWMA boundaries should be around 1,000 square miles if possible and have some sort of connection to the other DWMA's.

Using various maps Ed presented the plan for setting up four proposed DWMAs. The area enclosed in the DWMAs is only slightly larger than the size of existing Critical Habitat. (See Ed's eleven page handout for more details). Concerns raised:

- What if Los Angeles County does not participate in the Plan?
- Do other counties have to carry a proportionally larger share of the responsibility/consequences of the plan should Los Angeles County not participate?
- How might the 1% cap be affected by Los Angeles County non-participation?
- What are the Military's protection/management plans? (These plans are up for review every 5 years).

### **Agenda Item #3 Fremont –Kramer DWMA Boundary**

The task group next worked on refining boundary lines for the Fremont-Kramer DWMA. It focused on two areas where the proposed DWMA boundary differs from the existing Critical Habitat line. Each of these proposed boundary area changes have been given a letter designation: Area A (south of Edwards AFB) and Area B (north of El Mirage Dry Lake).

Questions regarding Los Angeles County's participation, existing legal tie-ups concerning property ownership and ceding more existing tortoise habitat for possible development were major concerns for area "A". Loss of a trail/road used for a yearly motorcycle race in the Shadow Mountains was a significant concern in area "B".

Time ran out before the discussion could be completed. Therefore, the group decided to meet again on February 14, 2000 at 9:30 A.M. in Victorville to continue with the boundary adjustment process. The meeting will go as long as needed and extend into the afternoon.